a renewed commitment to eliminate this scourge. For the first time, there was a clear reference to avoid double standards in tackling this challenge. The Summit also recognized the need to take the process of regional economic integration by expanding the scope of SAFTA (Agreement on South Asia Free Trade Area) to include trade in services, enhanced investment and harmonized standards. It decided to encourage trade-creating investment in member states. An Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment is under discussion.

The Dhaka Declaration adopted at the Summit included, *inter-alia,* regional cooperation in the areas of trade, commerce, poverty alleviation, social challenges, natural disasters, people-to-people contact and cultural cooperation. Other issues included in the Declaration related to SAARC's external profile and linkages, and to strengthening its institutional mechanisms and the funding mechanisms to undertake various proposals.

The Government is pursuing the proposals agreed at the Summit in close consultation with other SAARC member states.

Agreement signed with USA

†2762. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

the details of the agreement with the United States of America signed on the use of atomic energy; and

whether this agreement would not adversely affect the security system of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) No agreement has been signed with the United States of America on the use of atomic energy.

(b) Does not arise.

Trans-Asia Railway link

2763. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that representatives from seven Asian countries including India had earlier discussed setting up of a Trans-Asian Railway

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Link between India and Vietnam, passing through other countries including Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar;

if so, the details of the outcome of the discussions;

the details of any other proposal to set up an international railway line;

if no, such proposal exists, whether Government would consider setting up such a railway link; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The 3rd Ministrial meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation(MGC) initiative held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on June, 20, 2003 discussed the possibility of a rail link from Delhi to Hanoi. The member countries of MGC are India, Myanmar, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam.

It was agreed to study the feasibility of the rail link and to identify missing links. As a first step, a feasibility study has been conducted for an India-Myanmar rail link.

The United nations Economic Commission for Asia and Far East (ECAFE) initiated a Trans-Asian Railway project for providing a continuous rail link between Singapore and Turkey, *via* Southeast Asia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran in 1960. Work on this project has subsequently been undertaken by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) which replaced ECAFE in 1974.

Not applicable.

Does not arise.

Peace proposals with Pakistan

2764. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has recently put forward any peace proposals, while he was in Amritsar, to the President of Pakistan;